

lic matters either from the London "Times" or from announcements made in the Imperial Parliament. I may say that this question of a fast Atlantic service, as the hon. First Minister knows, has never been treated as a party question in this House. My hon. friend knows that the late Government after great deliberation arrived at the conclusion that it was of great importance to this country that we should obtain or realize the advantages that our geographical position presents for the purpose of a fast mail, passenger and freight communication of certain classes between Great Britain and Canada. The Government having arrived at the conclusion that great and important interests were to be subserved by the establishment of a fast service between Great Britain and Canada, which would have the effect of bringing a vast tide of travel of a very important character to Canada which otherwise we would not receive, that it would have the effect of carrying to a large extent the mails between Europe and America through Canada and across it, that it would have the effect of establishing a fast line of steam communication which, provided with ample cold storage, would give to our farmers enormous advantages in placing in prime condition within a few days agricultural products, especially perishable products, such as poultry, butter, eggs, meat, fruit and other articles, in the markets of Great Britain in the best condition—the Government having arrived after careful consideration at the determination that it was of great importance to this country to establish that line of fast communication, asked Parliament to vote £100,000 a year for ten years for the purpose of securing that object. Negotiations were undertaken with parties in Great Britain, and I was instructed, as High Commissioner for Canada, to give to persons interested in this matter all the support that possibly could be given in order to promote and secure a satisfactory settlement of this great question. I received an intimation from His Grace the Duke of Devonshire, who was president of the Naval Construction Armament Company—at that time negotiations were being carried on with the Government of Canada by the representative of that company, who came to Canada for the purpose, and I believe a provisional contract was entered into—that it was not possible to raise the capital required for that service unless the subsidy was increased from £100,000 to £150,000. I cabled at once to the late lamented Sir John Macdonald to say that the appropriation of £100,000 was found insufficient, and I stated the source from which I had received an intimation that the capital could not be raised unless £150,000 were provided. I was instructed in reply to say that if the service such as Canada demanded and required was accomplished, Parliament would be applied to and asked to extend the grant

from £100,000 to £150,000 per annum for ten years. The gentleman who was engaged in carrying on the negotiations, whose name at present escapes me, the manager of the Naval Construction Armament Company, was taken suddenly ill and died; and those efforts that were then being made were interrupted. Subsequently, as the House is aware, the Government made a provisional contract with Mr. Huddart, under which they engaged to give that gentleman £150,000 a year for ten years for the purpose of securing this fast Atlantic service. Mr. Huddart was a gentleman of great energy and enterprise, connected with Australia and London, and who was greatly interested in carrying this measure to completion, because being one of the principal proprietors of the service between Vancouver and Australia, which would be immensely benefited by the fast Atlantic service, no effort was spared by him in bringing to bear all the influence he could exercise on the London market, connected as he was with great shipping firms and steamship lines that were likely to be interested in the project, every possible effort was made, but made in vain, by Mr. Huddart to successfully accomplish the work he had undertaken. Under these circumstances I was instructed to approach Her Majesty's Government to endeavour to obtain additional assistance, and the time which the Government of Canada allowed Mr. Huddart to arrange his organization was extended, in order that he might ascertain if we were to get assistance from the Imperial Government. In company with all the representatives of Australasia, I went to the Colonial Office and impressed upon the Colonial Minister, then the Marquis of Ripon, the great importance that Canada and Australasia attached to this fast service, which we believed to be of Imperial concern as well, in the light of drawing Canada and the mother country much more closely together. I need not stop to remind the House that, at present, we are not only unable to bring that great tide of travel and mail communication between Europe and this country through Canada; but I presume that a very large proportion of Canadians who visit Europe go by way of New York, in consequence of the greater facilities and the greater saving of time they accomplish by so doing. This matter was pressed upon the Liberal Government in England when they were in power, and I am bound to say that it was received with hearty approval by the Marquis of Ripon, and by the members of the Administration generally, so far as I was able to ascertain. The Liberal party in England had not then the support of a very large majority in the House of Commons, and they did not make that rapid progress with the measure that we thought desirable. They did, however, appoint a very influential departmental committee, representing the Treasury, the